

St. George Business Alliance
MEMBER MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, April 24, 2018

Quarry Tavern, East Wind Inn, Tenants Harbor, ME

24 Meeting Attendees—**Members:** Angela Anderson (Artist), Chris Austin (Austin Payment Solutions), Gayle Bedigian (Artist), Rich Betancourt (Carolwood Productions), Shari Closter (Trekks), Niki Fanczina (First National Bank), Melinda Ferrazza (ASK...for Home Care), Hunter Grindle (Hybrid Fitness), Dennis Gurgul (By the Bay Jazz), Sandra Hall (Resident), Suzanne Hall (Etta's Cottage), Jo Ann Hoppe (Blueberry Moose), Jan & Rosemary Limmen (Blue Tulip), Ann Matlack (Matlack Enterprises), Jake Miller (Resident and First National Bank), Joanne O'Shea (Craignair Inn), Carlton Winslow (Fabian Oil). **Non-Members/Presenters:** Heidi Neal (Loyal Biscuit), Gordon McAleer (Bixby & Co.), Nancy and Patrick O'Brien (FIORE Artisan Olive Oils & Vinegar), Julia Schulz (Speaking Place).

BUSINESS MEETING

Welcome—President Sandra Hall called the meeting to order at 9:10 am, welcomed attendees and invited everyone to introduce themselves.

Treasurer's Report—In the absence of Interim Treasurer Diane Hall, Sandra reported that the SGBA currently has a "healthy balance" in its 3 bank accounts thanks to first quarter payments of membership dues, ad sales for this year's "Welcome to St. George" Visitors Guide, and event sponsorship for our April 28 "Welcome Aboard" Expo and Job Fair.

SGBA By-Laws—With the help of an attorney in Camden, we are revising our SGBA By-Laws, as required of a 501c-6 corporation, in order to receive federal tax-exempt status.

SGBA Website—We continue to expand and improve SGBA's website to make it more informative for all users.

Member Education—Rosemary Limmen reported that 11 people registered for 2 QuickBooks classes held at the Jackson Memorial Library on April 12 and April 19. The free classes were co-sponsored by the SGBA, the Island Institute, the St. George CDC and the Jackson Memorial Library. Far-reaching publicity resulted in 3 class participants coming from as far away as Belfast and Boothbay Harbor. The one person who attended the second class said she was grateful for the very personal attention she received from the Axiom instructor. SGBA will continue to look for similar educational opportunities to help our members better manage and promote their businesses.

SGBA Scholarship—To date, we have received 2 applications for SGBA's \$1,000 scholarship. We expect to receive more applications by the Monday, April 30, 2018 deadline. The Scholarship Selection Committee will meet in early May to review applications and select SGBA's award winner. The winning student will be announced at his/her school's pre-graduation Awards Night. SGBA is funding the scholarship from proceeds of its Welcome Guide ad sales.

"Welcome to St. George" Visitors Guide—Sandra Hall reported that the 2018 Welcome Guide is almost ready to go to print. Delays have been caused because of the many businesses that joined or renewed their SGBA membership after our published deadline. Ad sales have surpassed Welcome Guide ad revenue reported for 2017. As in 2017, we plan to print 1,500 copies.

"Welcome Aboard" Business Expo and Job Fair—Jake Miller reported that a good mix of 29 member businesses have registered to participate in SGBA's "Welcome Aboard" event, as either Expo and/or Job Fair participants. The event is scheduled for Saturday, April 28, 10:00 am to 2:00 pm, at the St. George School. The hall is full and no more table space or sponsorships are available. Jake reported that Hope Memorial Humane Society is bringing one or more animals at the event. He hopes to beat last year's 120 attendance figure and reminded members that the St. George School 8th graders will be selling refreshments to raise money for their graduation trip to Quebec City.

Member Meetings—Upcoming meeting dates include:

Tuesday, May 22

5:00-7:00 pm in the East Wind Inn's Wan-a-set Restaurant

Program: "Speed Networking"

(Please come prepared with a 1-minute "information ad" for your business!)

Tuesday, June 19 5:00-7:00 pm at Luke’s Lobster, Tenants Harbor
After Hours Networking Social

Tuesday, July 17 5:00-7:00 pm at the Blue Tulip, Tenants Harbor
After Hours Networking Social (rain or shine!)

Sandra adjourned the business meeting at 10:15 am and asked Rosemary Limmen to introduce the meeting’s panel of presenters: Heidi Neal (Loyal Biscuit), Nancy O’Brien (FIORE Artisan Oil & Vinegars) and Gordon McAleer, father of Bixby & Co. founder Kate McAleer.

“Small Business Success Stories” Highlights

Presenters recounted how they their businesses evolved, when they decided the time was right to expand, why they have won awards, and what they are doing that has made them successful.

They offered the following success tips:

- 1) Go with your gut feeling. When making decisions, do what feels right, what your instincts tell you.
- 2) Be passionate about what you decide to do.
- 3) Don’t pass up once-in-a-lifetime opportunities, even if the timing may not match your business plan.
- 4) Do your homework. Study locations carefully before buying property or signing a lease. Where you establish your business could be the difference between success and failure.
- 5) Be consistent in your branding (i.e. logo, colors, type face, “look”) to build name recognition.
- 6) Be a visible part of the local business community. Network with local business owners so they know who you are and can recommend you to potential customers.
- 7) Don’t be an “absentee owner.” Build relationships with your staff and customers by being visible. Ideally, spend some time each week actually working in your store/gallery/locations.
- 8) Know your producers and vendors personally, especially those on whom you depend on for success.
- 9) Trust your staff. If you hire the right people and train them well, they will understand your mission and goals. And you will be able to depend on them to do what you expect.
- 10) Support local causes. Do all you can to give back to the communities you serve.

Respectfully submitted,
Rosemary Limmen, SGBA Board Member and Secretary
April 26, 2018
Approved: